

# City of Lake Geneva Avian Committee Minutes

Tuesday, December 9, 2025 6 p.m.

Lake Geneva City Hall; Conference Room 2A

**Members:** President – Sarah McConnell, Secretary – Kelley Happ, Jill Rodriguez, Beverly Leonard, Karen Gallo, Victoria Ross and Alderperson JaNelle Powers

**1. Call to Order:** 6:04 p.m. by Sarah McConnell

**2. Roll Call. The following members were present:** Sarah McConnell, Jill Rodriguez, Kelley Happ, Karen Gallo, Beverly Leonard and Victoria Ross and Alderperson JaNelle Powers were present.  
Others present: David Winger, guest

**3. Comments from the Public:** McConnell read a note submitted by Betty Volquardsen that Friends of Hillmoor will donate at least \$500 towards work relating to the Bird City/White Pelican Farm grant

**4. Approval of minutes from November 11, 2025**

**Motion to approve** amended minutes by Rodriguez, seconded by Ross

**Voice Vote:** approved

**5. Financial Report:**

The Avian Committee still has \$708 from the 2025 budget, and there are no outstanding expenses. It was stated that we are allowed to carry this amount into next year.

**6. Policy and Ordinance Initiatives:**

**a. Exterior Lighting Standards/Dark Sky Ordinance.** A list of comments and questions from the Zoning Department regarding our proposed ordinance was received. Ross met with Adam McCulloch to review and clarify, and another meeting with Ross, McCulloch, Dr. Amanda Bauer and Renee Hanlon will be set. Ross suggested we move the submittal to the Plan Commission from January to February; Committee members agreed. McCulloch will attend the Plan Commission meeting to help describe and educate the committee as to why this is important. Committee members agreed to offer a donation of \$50 to McCulloch for GLAS. Winger will make sure the proposal is submitted for the January Plan Commission meeting. It was agreed that this topic would be good for a Tuesday at 2 Museum program in conjunction with World Migratory Bird day activities.

**b: Climate Related Topics.** No discussion at this time

**7. Annual Events and Applications:**

**a. Swift Night Out:** The City is planning to make repairs (tuckpointing) to the chimney at the museum – we are requesting that repairs be done before the Chimney Swifts begin nesting season in spring. We have officially changed the date of SNO for next year due to it falling on the holiday weekend and McConnell will confirm the new September 10 date at the museum when it starts scheduling in January.

**b. Bird City Application:** The 2026 application is due by March 15. Ross thinks we have plenty of points to retain the High Flyer status but suggested we add more details on our biggest projects and less attention to those that are not our priorities. This would make it easier to update every year. We need to include a Resolution from the City; Powers advised getting this on the City's agenda for January.

**c. World Migratory Bird Day:** The official date of WMBD is the second Saturday of May (May 9). Avian members agreed we would like to offer a Tuesday @ 2 educational program at the Geneva Lake Museum in April or May. We also discussed planning a bird walk for the public, maybe at Hillmoor, to bring attention to the bird migratory season. Happ will contact the local Audubon Committee and Geneva Lake Conservancy to discuss possibilities.

## **8. Projects and Partnerships:**

**A. Hotel Birding Backpacks:** Rodriguez continues to contact local hotels about the backpacks. So far we have 7 participants.

It was advised to avoid using netting or webbing in landscaping – birds and other animals can get caught in the web and strangle. Mention this to landscapers using these in your neighborhoods.

**B. Purple Martin/Kestrel houses:** Leonard had the Martin houses cleaned and sealed for winter; ready to reopen in spring. Broken items have been repaired or replaced. She requested that we store the containers of supplies (straw, bird song machine and gourds) in the public works warehouses instead of her storage area. She will ask Earle.

**C. Native Plant Grant Project:** McConnell met with a landscape contractor to look at the proposed bed area in Hillmoor. Costs to clear the 5 x 30 - foot area, rototill and add mushroom compost is \$1500. Rodriguez confirmed that we have allocated \$500 for this project, we also have carry-over funds and Friends of Hillmoor have offered \$500. McConnell also met with the DNR regarding the stream: we cannot use professional landscapers to work on the stream bed and banks, but we can move small rocks by hand. It was pointed out that we might create a liability issue to use local scouting or volunteer groups to help.

## **9. Adjournment:**

**Motion** to adjourn by Rodriguez, seconded by Happ

**Voice vote** carried at 7:00 p.m.

## **Next Meeting Date and Time**

The next Avian meeting will be held on **Tuesday January 6 at 5 pm in Conference Room 2 A.**

Respectfully submitted

Kelley Happ

Secretary, Avian Committee